enough, and move towards ensuring policy harmonisation over time and across space. This requires the Planning Commission to strengthen its role as a "Think Tank"—a repository of expert knowledge.

Planning Commission is currently engaged in an exercise to determine what would be the most effective role for the Commission in the altered domestic and global scenario. In this regard, a note prepared on the Role of the Planning Commission in the wake of changing economic scenario was discussed in the full Planning Commission Meeting held on 30th September, 2000 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The proposal was broadly approved and is to be further discussed between the Deputy Chairman and the Union Finance Minister.

Disparities between rural and urban areas

2977. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the disparities between the rural and urban areas in most of the States are widening;

(b) if so, the details of various indicators to show this trend; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to narrow down these disparities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The State-wise estimates of the ratio of per capita urban to per capita rural consumption expenditure as obtained from the two latest large sample surveys of the household consumption expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation in its 50th and 55th Round, are given in the statement *(See below)*.

(c) The priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of

poverty and accelerating the growth rate of the economy with stable prices, accorded in the Ninth Five Year Plan is likely to reduce the disparity between the rural and urban areas.

Statement

Ratio of Per Capita Urban to Rural Consumption Expenditure

State	1993-94	1999-2000
1. Andhra Pradesh	1.42	1.70
2. Assam	1.78	1.91
3. Bihar	1.62	1.56
4. Gujarat	1.50	1.62
5. Haryana	1.23	1.28
6. Himachal Pradesh	2.13	1.81
7. Jammu and Kashmir	1.49	1.41
8. Karnataka	1.57	1.82
9. Kerala	1.27	1.22
10. Madhya Pradesh	1.62	1.73
11. Maharashtra	1.94	1.96
12. Orissa	1.83	1.66
13. Punjab	1.18	1.21

State	1993-94	1999-2000
14. Rajasthan	1.32	1.45
15. Tamil Nadu	1.49	1.89
16. Uttar Pradesh	1.42	1.48
17. West Bengal	1.70	1.91

Realisation of the projections on Poverty Line

2978. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent estimates suggest that the projections on reduction of proportion and number of people Below Poverty Line made in the Ninth Plan have not been realised in the first two years of the plan period;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for non realisation of the projections; and

(d) to what extent the structural reforms policies are responsible for this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) The annual projections of the proportion and number of people below the povery line have not been made in the Ninth Five Year Plan. However, the Ninth Five Year Plan has projected the percentage of people living below the poverty line to 17.98% by the terminal year of the Ninth Five Year Plan (2001-02).

(b) to (d) Do not arise.